VOL. II SHANGHAI, OCTOBER 1903 No. 7

THE RATTLE

Our old friend, the Rattleman, has been in Wei-hai-wei since the First of June. He telegraphs every week saying "Return impossible no steamer available."

We are getting anxious . . . . . .

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AGENTS IN CHINA:

ILBERT & Co.

THE

RATTLE

Pleased with a rattle, tickled with a straw—*Pope.*

Vol. II] SHANGHAI, OCTOBER 1903 [No. 7

EN PASSANT.

THE "RATTLE" is nothing if not casual. It pleases us to burst upon a grateful world, like Mrs. Gamp, "when so disposed," coming forth, not at the stern bidding of creditors on a fixed date, but like crocuses, or policemen, when least expected. The public may thus account (or not, as it pleases) for the interval of some eighteen months which has elapsed since the appearance of Vol. II, No. 6. This much, however, we may say: So long as the River flows past the Bund, and so long as the Well continues to Bubble, so long will the "RATTLE" be capable of materialising, provided always Fate leaves us our Genius Pictorial.

Is he on leave, we chew the cud of stagnation; is he sick, we pause for his convalescence; peradventure, he sleepeth, only the morn can tell the prospect for the next issue; lastly, should he wed, that day were truly our Ides of March.

Perhaps 'tis foolish even to mention it, but the Archer Babe's abroad and weddings are in the air. Everyone whose circumstances permit is having one; the Cathedral is said to be booked up to Christmas, and the sacrificial altar welters in the prospect of some twenty-six victims. Is the season's great harvest of grooms in compensation for the backward cotton, or do we take an unnecessarily alarmist view of a very ordinary situation? In any case we dismiss the passing horrid thought and hasten to our muttons.

* * * *

While we have slept, the world, our little world, has been moving much as usual. As a geographical expression China has been modified and a certain amount of history has been made, most of it obvious and dull. To the casual observer, things may seem much the same. Manchuria appears to be where it was, the Empress Dowager continues to display her girlish abandon for the edification of Legations and globe-trotters, and the Wai-wu-pu continues in business, watching the territories of H.M. Kuang Hsu dwindle and fade while gratefully pouching the proceeds. The Lessarning process is one which hungry mandarins can appreciate; for them, a pleasant life is of more account than a dynasty.

* * * *

But despite the dullness of Legation days and the highly dignified calm which as of yore distinguishes life at the capital, the "RATTLE" has its doubts. Things are being done in the City of Dreadful Dirt of which no mention is made by the polite dignitaries who trump each others' best cards at the Peking Club, and the natural conclusion of these things will be one more river to cross for the Imperial Household and a house-warming at Hsianfu. One of Tsu Hsi's worst Abbots has lately been to confer with Mr. Lessar at Po-Yün-kuan, and now there is going to be a Russian railway from Kalgan to Hailar.

* * * * *

Nevertheless our sympathies are largely with the Empress Dowager. To begin with, she is a woman of ideas; they may be medieval and a trifle blood-thirsty, but they exist (which in the Place of Protocols is refreshing) and she sticks to them. The fact that she lacks a sufficient number of armed men to put them into effect and us into the sea is more her misfortune than her fault. But if the "RATTLE" is not much mistaken the old lady is going to have another run for (and then with) her money and to give her friends of the Diplomatic Body another opportunity of recognising her "amazing individuality."

* * * * *

And in the meanwhile she does not allow her pleasant chats with Mrs. Conger, the painting of her portrait, or the charming amenities with which she entertains her recently-bombarded foreign friends, to interfere with the serious business of a strenuous life. The sale of offices (hours 11 to 5) continues as of old; the levying of douceurs from all who come for audience, the daily discipline of her misguided nephew Tsai

T'ien, and the suppression of his friends the reformers, all this is enough to occupy any woman's time. The leisure left her for learning the cake-walk and for painting the fans required by her Legation friends is but little; as to the nice quiet chats with Li, to discuss new tortures for native journalists, these are things of the past, which may account for the sad want of originality in the killing of Shen Ke-wei.

* * * *

Turning to local matters, here too we have had our little events, and of some the end is not yet. For the nonce the Public School is at rest and we are spared the painful spectacle of the passively resisting Nonconformist conscience in our midst; Treaty revision has pursued its farcical and quite useless way; while such matters as the "Supao" case, the question of Tramways and the state of the Yangkingpang, pass not away. Things like these have a way of remaining in a state of suspended animation, ready at any moment to emerge and prevent life becoming too pleasant.

* * * *

Of the Yangkingpang we shall hear more when the Ratepayers meet next in high debate. In the meanwhile its spirit breathes in the following beautiful lines :—

I come from haunts of heathen men,
Where few would care to dally,
I gather filth from many a den,
And drains from every alley;

I carry microbes up and down,
I swarm with germs and midges,
My horrid odours fill the town
And rot the bunds and bridges,

And thus past George McBain's I flow
To join the muddy river,
And men may come and men may go
But I go on for ever.

Just forty years ago the talk began
Of culverts versus *creeks, and still it flows;*
We Britons call ourselves a hardy race,
Our friends of France are still boulvardier.

I chatter past the abattoir
Through properties of Lester's,
My mud resembles *café noir*,
It oozes and it festers;

Yet Ellis calls me "silver streak"
And other dainty fancies,
Because he'd rather have a creek
Than *boulevards*, would Francis.

So let the French proclaim their woe,
Let doctors talk of fever,
For Councils come and Councils go
But I go on for ever.

A right hilarious afternoon was the medal-giving of the S.V.C., an animated bust *in excelsis*. Perhaps a sharp downpour of rain would have rounded off the jollity and given that final shake up which was all that was required to send everybody home in riotous good humour. The distinguished visitor had a smile for all and a quiet word of greeting for a few of the warriors; the smile was visible to the world but the greetings have been locked each in its own special bosom; so Sergeant McCormick and Gunner O'Driscoll are able to maintain that pregnant silence which signifies "Bertie Wales and I" in one breath. The muddle of sorting was immense, names were cried whose owners were either shyly beyond the pailings or altogether beyond the pale, eminent taipans, policemen, and others waited till, in despair of hearing their family inheritance vociferated, they mingled with the children gaping on the foreshore and wore the look of mere tired spectators. At the end came a scramble where the staff seemed like divers in a lucky tub, and Sir Ernest murmured with the patriarch "when will they be done?" The Band held aloof and discoursed tunes calculated to kill the kine within a mile radius; the Corps survived, being well beyond that limit. It *was* fun.

* * * *

To anyone who wishes to appreciate the beauties of a free country by comparison, we recommend a visit to the cage where the Supao prisoners are awaiting the good pleasure of the Concert of Europe or the Diplomatic Body. That they will eventually get out—from the Supao into the soup is likely enough, but the question which wants answering is, how long is Shanghai going to keep these poor devils in durance pending a further polite communication from His Excellency Monsieur Sick'un de Whalebone or whoever may be the party that arranges these matters in the intervals of discussing the order of precedence at dinner? What reason have we for supposing that the "*avguste areopage*" as the French paper calls that invertebrate Body, will settle the matter any sooner than, say, the Conservancy Board? No, if the Chinese Government will not sue, the prisoners should be allowed to pow, and the sooner the better.

* * * * *

Is there a reader of the "RATTLE" who has not suffered from the nausea of the after-dinner song? If such a man there be, to him we dedicate the following in memory of recent sufferings in many parlours :—

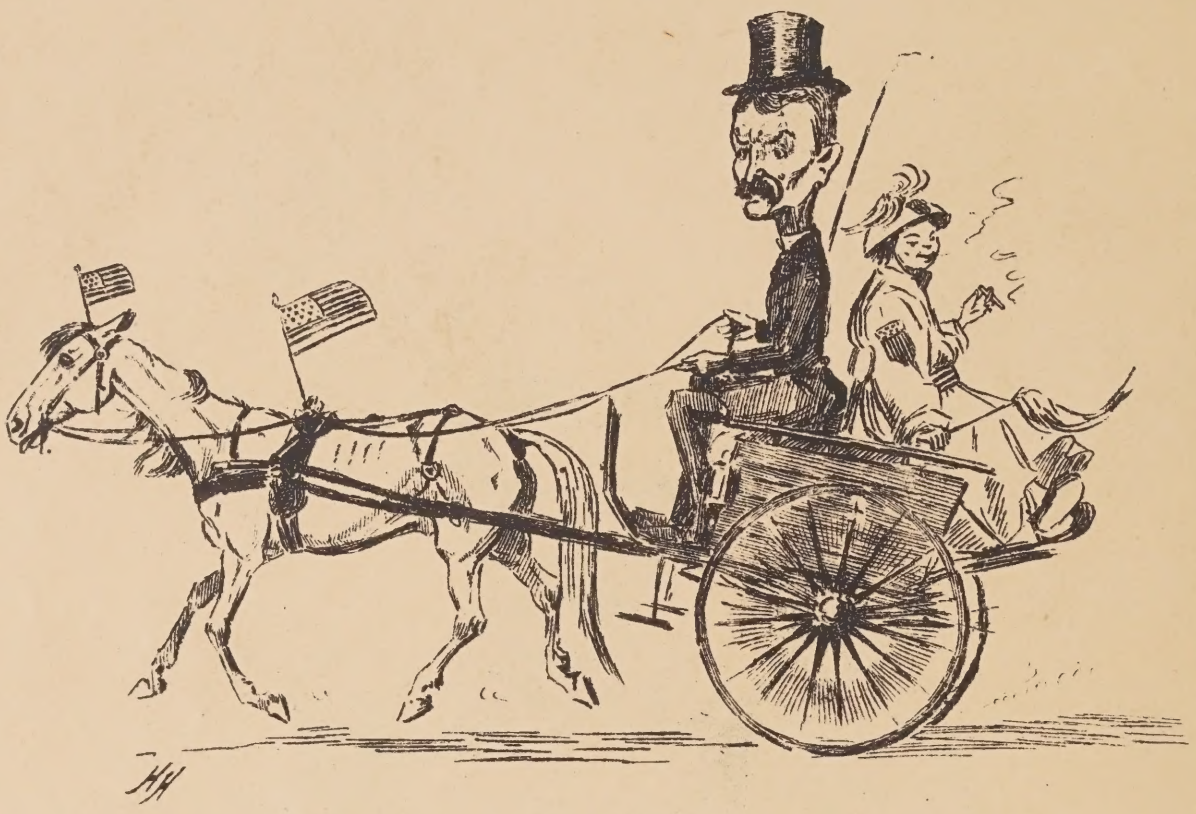
THE SCAVENGER TO HIS CHUTE.

[*From "Songs before Breakfast."*]

Every morn I bring thee Garbage,
Which by daylight I have culled,
And by night I pile thee carloads
From pestif'rous alleys pulled;

Guard, oh guard, these fragrant offerings,
Speed them gently on their way,
Till folks dream of thee the nightlong
And expectorate by day.

CHARLIE'S NEW CLOTHES



THE DOYEN OF THE CONSULAR BODY.

INTERPORT HONOURS.

The yoke on the shoulders of the selecting authority shall owe no extra pound to the RATTLE, that is to say the RATTLE will not suffer itself to nominate the occupants of those last two places in the eleven, no, not for all the gold in Weihai; but "Too old to catch or be caught" sends in the following lantern slides, and the gentle and indulgent one may make what he can of them.

"The Skipper."—Taken in order of personal beauty, skill and wiliness (all of which should go to make up an ideal leader) the captain comes easily first. Coupled with that bland suavity of manner so calculated to disarm opponents, we have the very quintessence of craftiness and subtle scheming. See how, with one flick of his fierce moustachios, he puts the bowler off as he is about to bowl and than swipes him callously to leg for four. What deep laid plots are being thought out beneath that spreading sombrero, who can tell? Let us rest content that in our skipper we have one whose knowledge and love of the game and its ins and outs fit him preeminently for the post he will shortly ornament with so much dignity and grace.

"Willie."—The most brillant bat we have. Has a sweet disposition and is sometimes known as Sweet William on this account, indeed, it is a matter of the deepest wonder how he can bring himself to clump the bowling in the hard-hearted manner which is his wont. He is deceptive, speaking potentially, as you shall see: It is 3.15 on a hot Saturday afternoon and a wicket has fallen. The fielders are waiting for the next man in. He comes, guileless youth with mien so meek and manner so gentle that the bowlers' hearts are touched. He sends for his sweater—"poor fellow he is delicate and so nervous" say the ladies in the tea tent. The first ball is a good hot yorker which would probably bowl two out of three men, but Willie blocks it and hangs his head in shame as much as to say that a man who can't score off *that* has no business in the team. Wait abit, however; after he has had about three overs he is spanking the best balls that the best bowlers can put up at him, like so much tosh and mind you, all so calmly and in such an apologetic way that when he comes out it actually seems natural to hear him say, "It was awfully good of you fellows to let me get a few runs," just as if the bowlers had not been in vain trying their best to get him out all the afternoon.

Heaven help the poor bowlers and fielders if Willie gets on the job. He'll be very sorry, he will not have meant to be cruel, but he will have taken a century all the same if only they give him half a slant.

"K. J."—It is most essential that the moral tone of a team be kept up, and, in view of K. J.'s official capacity in public life throughout the day, we can conceive of no fitter person for supporting the M. T. than himself. Of course he is a first-class bat and a first-class bowler, and he would far rather run a man out than run him in, but even then he would prefer to bail him out if possible. But when playing cricket the pitch becomes his beat and a ball needs more than a rather good pitch to beat him.

"Safe hands" is assured of a place if only to maintain the standard of beauty. As a bowler he is first class as he has a commanding voice. His greatest failing is that he gives away the secrets of his success too easily. One may frequently hear how one of his favourite dodges is to break six inches from the off and then next ball six inches from the leg on to the wicket. This was almost universally successful until those to whom he disclosed it so grossly

abused his confidence as to take advantage of the information, when, of course, as he says he dropped it. It is quite true that he never practises this wily dodge now. It is in the field of course that the "hands" come in, that is when once the ball is in them, but they are so large and unwieldy that what usually happens is that ere they can be collected a violent blow in the pit of the stomach temporarily allays all interest in immediate proceedings.

"G.M.B." may be described as a more than ordinary good-lengthed bowler. When in form he is most expensive on account of his great pace. In its passage through the air the ball not infrequently becomes so hot that it is impossible for the wicket-keeper to hold it.

Sad to relate an injury sustained in keeping goal at football has precluded all possibility of his acquiring his old pace this year, and he is now a fastish medium bowler with a lot of work on the ball, which unfortunately steadily refuses to come off. In this way the batsman is often deceived and loses his wicket. He relies now for wickets chiefly on his ability to contract his features into the most horrible grimaces with a view to intimidating the batsmen.

He is long-winded and long-legged with large expansive feet which give him a good grip of the pitch. As illustrating his great height, G.M.B. frequently complains, when batting, of the sun being "in his eyes" some time after it has, to the ordinary observer, sunk for below the horizon.

"Bill," the God-like and only, is remarkable for his speed and agility between the wickets. No finer example of the excellence of the climate and fare of Shanghai and its effect on the human form than that which would be afforded by the inclusion of Bill in the team, could be imagined. Not that we wish to insinuate that his functions would be purely and solely ornamental, for everyone knows that Bill *has strokes* and has given exhibitions, once this season in particular, of excellent all-round batting which no one in Shanghai could equal. As a bowler his pretensions are modest but as a point, in every but Euclid's sense, he stands alone. Although a rather too ample form prevents his hands from coming close enough together in front to allow of his catching a ball in that position, yet this only increases the danger of the batsman's being stumped or run out from the rebound.

His undoubted veracity as a raconteur should stand him in good stead, as no Interport Festival would be complete without a selection of his startling reminiscenses.

"J.B.," than whom is there no better known sportsman in Shanghai. His county can even now be traced at times by his accent. Sometimes known as the "Evergreen" he well fits the name, for he is still as hard a nut to crack as most.

His abilities as a player are considerable, while at the festive board his fund of anecdote is inexhaustible. He thus alludes to the creeping on of old age :—

> "Does ta think becos tha's got a owd grey knobbed unto laike wi as tha can dew as tha likes?"
> "Sithe, tha's a fule if tha does an' if tha says much tha'll get a rap ower t'nut wi this booit."
> "Ere Fairbridge, tha knows, laike oup, it's a reet. Ah, can field 'alf a a-acre as long as tha does na beowl."
> "Does ta wuk at t' mill?"
> "Bu-oy coom 'ere let's 'a' summat t'et, 'ast tha got a shatta brawn."
> Ah, thank the boss for what Ah'm getten
> But if there'd been more browt there'd a been more etten.

"Bertie" comes of a stock which it would be hard to beat. Himself a nice quiet lad with a kind face, quite content to remain at the wicket as long as the captain wishes, and unwilling to be reckless, he has many times shewn himself the mainstay of the side. Except for one slight display of spleen on the occasion of the last match with the Straits when annoyed by the approach of short-leg he furiously drove the ball hard between that player's eyes, his character is spotless.

"Dedi" o' that ilk has run into length somewhat and gets a big swing on a very fast ball. A great favourite with the tea tent, for is not youth in his favour?

"W.H.C.W." is acknowledged to be the finest exponent extant of the stroke which induces a shortish ball well on the off to betake itself round to square leg and it is from this that the name of the stroke—"the wipe"—is derived. Nevertheless, as the observant onlooker may have devined, it is not for his batting as much as for his wicket-keeping that W.H.C.W. is regarded as indispensable. Here again the dexterity and speed with which this player upsets the bail and the batsman's career at the same time have given rise to the expression for knocking off the bail to "Weippert" or "whip it" off. It is rumoured that much of W.H.C.W.'s skill is due to supernatural agency and this belief is strengthened by the legend that the dilapidated and worn out old tile which decorates the classic brow of the gentleman in question on the occasion of any important fixture, is in reality a toad-stool which was formerly a witch's resting-place. The evidence against this is that the hat of the legend was supposed to be endued with the power of imparting extreme beauty of countenance to its wearer ! *

THE NEW CHUM.

Consul of Far Mexico,
Welcome in our midst to-day;
Glad to meet you, Sir; what ho!
(In our democratic way).

Now the Clamp we used to know,
By the kind decrees of Fate,
With a pair of Gees shall show
Pride of Consular estate.

Now to meetings he shall go
With his colleagues polyglot,
They shall hear from Mexico
Whether Clamp has heard or not.

If no favouring winds should blow
Nimble Mexicans this way,
That wo'nt bother Clamp, you know,
For they'll come to him in pay.

(Other Consulates ca'nt show
Seven subjects to protect,
Not a ship to fight the foe,
Yet the Consuls don't object.)

Consul Clamp, now when you go
Calling on the Taotai's lot,
Do not queer the solemn show,
Wear, oh wear, your chimney-pot.

Lots of buttons in a row
Lots of little bits of lace;
You can dress the part, we know,
Do the thing with style and grace.

If you find the job is slow
And their meetings far too long,
See if you ca'nt make them go
With a dance or patter-song.

Consul Clamp, again, what ho!
Thou of Mexico, here's fun!
If you're doubtful how to go,
Keep your weather-eye on John!

* This article, like the Shanghai XI on the first day of the match, may be described as "after the ball."

The Kung Boo Hen and the Su Pao Chickens

Fei Loong and Fei Ma congratulate one another on the suppression of the Waler.

THE BRIDGE

(A Fragment).

I sat over Bridge at midnight,
As the clock was striking the hour,
(The clock which shines o'er the Customs
In its Moorish-Gothic tower).

I had time for mature reflection,
A smoke and another drink,
For Jones was playing a spade-hand
And Jones is the deuce to think.

(He thinks like a Cabinet Council,
And therefore it does seem hard
That when he has made his mind up
He plays the silliest card.)

I had time, I say, for reflection,
('Twas a beautiful night in June,)
And weary of Jones's features,
I whistled a thoughtful tune;

And as glasses were slowly emptied,
Waiting for Jones to play,
The "boy" would glide in from somewhere
And lift them and bear them away.

Ah, seeing that native's fleetness,
And Jones, oh, so deadly slow,
A flood of thought came o'er me,
And my heart was a chunk of woe.

How often, oh, how often
I have wished that some card-strewn tide
Would take poor Jones and bear him
On its bosom wild and wide,

Bear him, and leave him stranded
In a place where lugubrious shades
Play on for ever and ever,
Making it always spades;

Trumping each others' winners,
Getting the score all wrong,
Wondering where the lead is,
Arguing all night long;—

But I know that it may not be so,
And that in the years to be,
I shall find him there in the bridge-room
Waiting to cut with me.

But when, in the Great Hereafter,
Sound the Archangel's tones,
It's morally certain, believe me,
No trumps will awaken Jones.

FERGUSO

GUARDS

IN A PICKWICKIAN SENSE.

Johnny swore a feud
  Which caused Ivan much trouble;
Ivan thought he might
  Essay two rôles to double.
Be Bear and Lion both,
  A ticklish game to try on.
So Russki's still the Bear,
  But likewise does the Lion.

This Russki has a tongue
  Which condescends to flatter,
A tongue which rattles off
  A fascinating patter.
Now all its arguments
  A British author quickens,
And Tolstoi yields the palm,
  To Pickwick and to Dickens.

At first he built a row
  Of slender wooden palings
Which in a night had grown
  To graceful iron railings.
"We block your view? Oh, no!
  You may look through of course-ski.
In our Pickwickian sense.
  This *is* an Open-Doorski.

"Evacuate? You asked
  That undertaking from us,
And, since we passed our word,
  Be sure we'll keep our promise.
Fresh troops we're pouring in
  With calm reiteration?
In our Pickwickian sense
  That *is* Evacuation.

"Restore Manchuria? Yes:
  Of course we mean to one day,
We said on Tuesday week,
  Or did we mention Monday?
But 'Monday week' implies,
  (No doubt you comprehended),
In our Pickwickian sense,
  When fifteen years are ended."

On Newchwang's Custom-House
  What means the Russki banner?
We're doing China good
  In our peculiar manner.
The money's China's? True:
  We've always owned and said it.
In our Pickwickian sense
  It's paid to China's credit.

Our new Siberian Route
  Is cutting out the ocean:
We've comfortable cars
  And Poetry of Motion.
"Oh, rats!" I hear you growl:
  You needn't be so furious,
In our Pickwickian sense
  It's rapid and luxurious.

"Why so dissatisfied?
  Why this eternal mumbling?
'But where do I come in?'
  Methinks I note you grumbling.
You don't come in at all,
  Though you may think you ought to,
Better accept the facts;
  I fear, dear John, you've got to."

G.M.H.P.

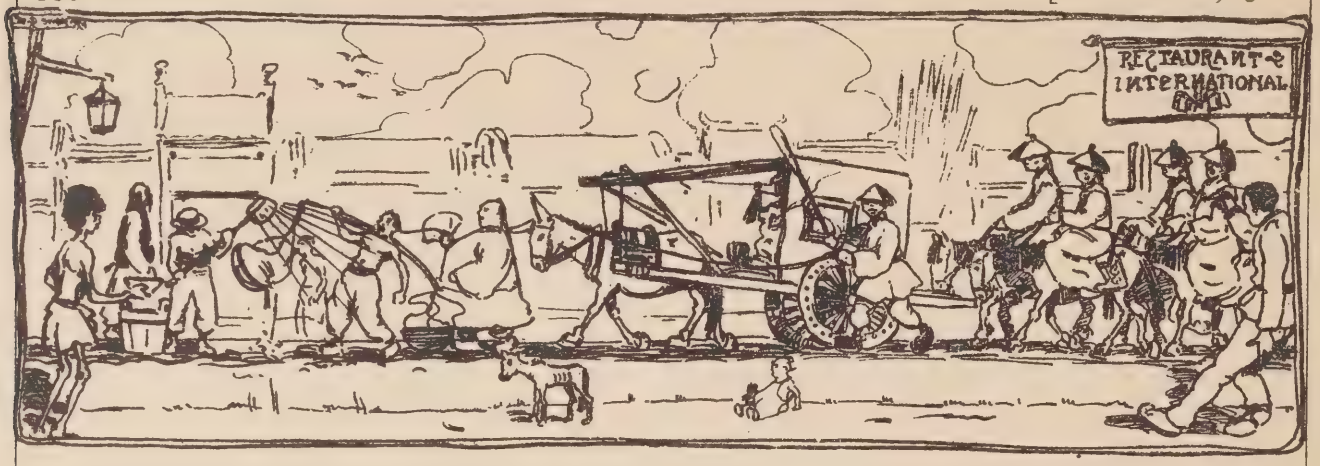
ALGY NEWSTUFF.—Say Freddy old man, where's Smith?

FREDDY.—Oh! he's down with Dengue.

A. N.—By the way, who the devil is Dengue and where is she?

***** The answer to this conundrum, and interesting extracts from the Jerusalem Gazetteer, will be found in the pages of our so-called Senior Morning Contemporary.**

H. I. M. the Empress Dowager has at last consented to sit for her portrait.



PEKING UP TO DATE.

A PALACE DIALOGUE.

Time, 5 a.m., August 18th, 1903.

Place.—The Empress Dowager's ante-room at Eho Park.

Persons.—Wing Kai, woman of the bedchamber. Lai Loh, a menial eunuch.

Lai Loh.—Get on with the work, thou slut. She is already abroad and may come at any moment, and then, who shall save the bones? Sweep up those melon seeds—take away the cigarette ash. The room is as filthy as those of Paotingfu.

Wing Kai.—Peace, old crow. This is the birthday of Tsai-t'ien, whom men in the eighteen provinces still speak of as Emperor. This morning she holds audience, so that he may pay her the nine kotows. She comes not here till midday. I shall take my time (*proceeds to light a Pinhead cigarette*).

Lai Loh.—Ay, it is his birthday, the fifth since he began to eat the rice of penitence. Hast thou heard, silly one, what gift she meant to offer him to-day?

Wing Kai.—More Russian roubles? Nay, he is tired of them.

Lai Loh.—No, nor yet another consort, for of them he is also tired. This time she meant to give him the head of Kang Yu-wei, pickled in Cantonese brine, but I hear it cannot yet be got. Those English dogs still guard him from the vengeance of Tsu Hsi: but she will have it, sooner or later, if it costs half the ransom of Su and Wang.

Wing Kai.—Well, thou croaker, what then? How spend we the day?

Lai Loh.—'Tis a Court holiday. The Princes and the Chiefs of the Eight Banners are excused from attendance. She has invited those foreign women from the Legations to tea; he shall sit and hear her talk to them of western methods and reform: that always makes him melancholy.

Wing Kai.—What, are they coming again? Ay, the shameless ones! But is it true, old fox, that some of them were amongst those she tried to burn out of their holes but three summers ago?

Lai Loh.—Ay, 'tis true; more than one.

Wing Kai.—How come they here—dost thou not suspect treachery?

Lai Loh.—Thou brainless waterpot! As a melon in a field of yams is she—of greater understanding than all the women of the Chin Ch'ais' Yamêns. She has them in her girdle even as the dogs of Li Lien-ying lie in his sleeve.

Wing Kai.—Oh, wise one! Truly thy brains are more than the hairs on thy face. And wherefore come they?

Lai Loh.—Are ye not all alike, ye mean ones of the inner chamber? Within the four seas truly all women are foolish. She catches them as boys catch larks, with mirrors; mark you, simpleton, these Legations have no mind of their own—where one leads, all the rest follow, like ants on a wall. Dost thou think that the women of England and America would sleep in peace if those of Russia and France came alone to tea with her? They are jealous, and fight amongst themselves: each wishes to be able to say "yesterday I saw the great Tai Hou." None, not even those who ate horseflesh in the Yingkuofu, could bear to remain at home.

Wing Kai.—Ay, thou speakest truth; they struggle for a sight of the Presence like dogs at the Hatamên. And what of the one who has come from America to paint the Great One's portrait?

Lai Loh.—It seems that they are to have a great festival where all the wonders of the world will be seen. Knowest thou not that, ever since she returned from Hsian, the old Wily One pleases

these foreigners by pretending to follow their ways? Is it for nothing that she allows them to swarm in the Forbidden City, that she loads them with gifts—at our expense—and permits those uncivilised daughters of Yü Keng to posture in barbarous foreign fashion within the sacred precincts?

Wing Kai.—What does she gain thereby, old tortoise?

Lai Loh.—Surely thou wert born on a foggy day! Knowest thou not that in the taking of gifts injuries are forgotten? And shall not all these Chin Ch'ais and their wives tell their own people that she who kisses them on the cheek and pretends to learn their devilish language, is the heaven-sent ruler and a benevolent woman? Shall they not believe that the I-Ho-Chüan were rebellious people, who did not her bidding—and shall she not the more easily prepare to rid the country of them all? Next time there will be no mistake.

Wing Kai.—If thy purse is as full as thy head, thou shouldst lend me ten thousand cash! Is it because she has them all in her net that Duke Lan now returns by night to the Palace and that she gives orders to slay those newspaper devils?

Lai Loh.—Ay, even thou canst see into a rice-pot when the lid is off. She has them now, as a hawk on the wrist, and they will do her bidding. Are not last year's make-face Edicts already as wastepaper, and is not Lu Chuan-lin a great man to-day, even as Kang Yi was before?

Wing Kai.—Doubtless thou art right. Nevertheless, I like these parties, and even the foreign devils have their uses. Knowest thou that one of them, an American, gave me five dollars for a chair-bearer's samshu cup? She offered me ten for one of the Old One's shoes, but I dared not.

Lai Loh.—Sell thy shoe, silly one; sell thy shoe. Before long they will get the boot also (*Exit Lai Loh; Wing Kai left thoughtfully smoking*).

TSZ-LIN.

The morning paper editor, I speak in all humility,
Accepts a lot of rubbish he should properly refuse,
He doesn't seem to bother much provided he can fill it; he
Thus justifies the soubriquet or nickname "Daily Snooze."

First there's Reuter, sometimes garnished with facetious local headings,
Jaded jests that get no brighter when repeated day by day,
Then the possible announcement of a pair of recent weddings,
And a leader on the weather, or the I.M. Customs pay.

The minutes of the Council make a weekly dish of platitude,
(Oh, the fabulous statistics of jinricsha tickets sold!)
The views, the comments, and reports, and finally the attitude
Adopted on a question after councillors have polled.

Sherry samples, novel birthday books with maxims from Justinian,
These have their little ten-line space 'twere captious to begrudge,
But who, among your readers, ever values the opinion
Which is only too transparently mere advertising fudge?

Now a correspondent prattles from his home in the interior
Of a magistrate's misdoings from the mission point of view,
His thermometer or rain-guage isn't high enough to query, or
His views about the paddy round the town of Ping-pong-fu.

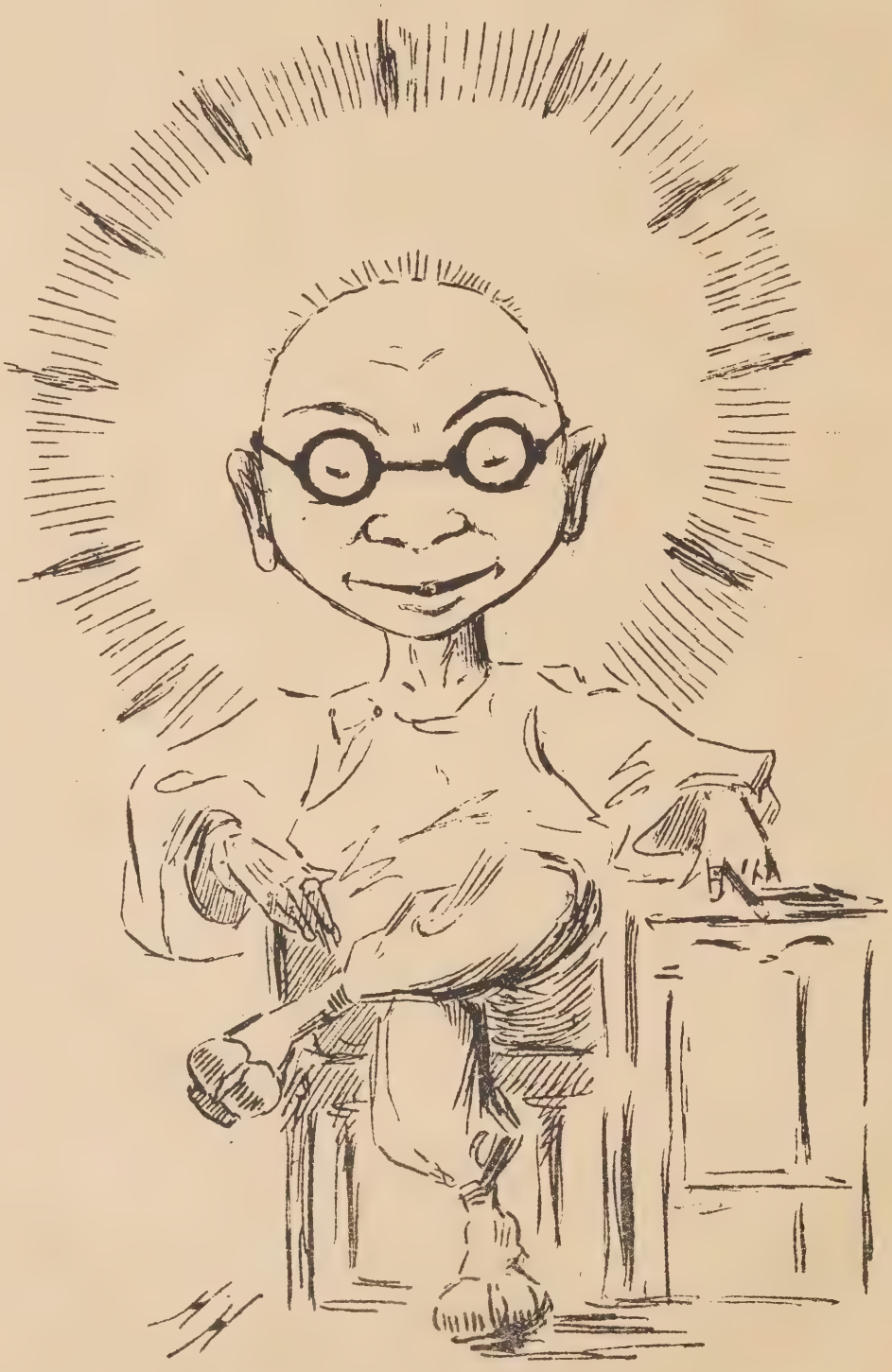
The wail of the purveyor of electrical accessories,
A never ending topic for a column, may be more,
And of all the weary lines of thought the worst, I must confess, are his,
His grumble has no interest and it seldom fails to bore.

How scant is the attention paid to grandiose prospectuses,
But little—save amusement at rapacity exposed,
The only illustration of the way the things affect us is
The smile of incredulity—the pocket firmly closed.

The caterwaul absurdities that Kuling seems to revel in,
The missionary *potpourri* of babies and the rain,
Gelatinous abstractions, Sir, without a spice of devil in;
Return 'em, Mr. Editor, pray whang them back again.

The share list and the shipping fill their daily allocations,
Their hold upon the populace admittedly is strong,
But it's better through a broker to get accurate quotations,
And the details of the steamers are invariably wrong.

The tale of your shortcomings might be carried on *ad libitum*.
One little fact, however, it is only fair to state:—
With all your faults, and Goodness knows in squillions you exhibit' em,
The coolie gets a wigging if the morning paper's late.



MEN OF THE MOMENT

Portrait of Mr. .... (We are not permitted to mention the name) who is credibly reported to have bought a bale of Shirtings, paid for it and shipped it out of Shanghai! We cannot vouch for the truth of this story.

MUSIC AT THE PUBLIC GARDEN.

SCHERZO IN A SHARP (AND ONE FLAT).

A MEMORY.

"I cannot but remember such things were."
—*Macbeth.*

"Let those now dance who never danced before,
Let those who always danced, dance all the more."
—*After* Parnell.

Cras saltet qui nunquam saltavit.
Quique saltavit, cras saltet.
—*After* Catullus.

THE following lines, cast off some thirty years ago before Shanghai had quite accomplished the tale of her salad days, and which by the merest freak of incidence have but recently come forth from their long hibernation, have reference to a feature of the times, and to a coterie which had more than an ephemeral existence, to whom it gave a name, not absolutely forgotten or buried yet, though admittedly moribund.

It was in the early seventies that the cult of Terpsichore became the passion of the hour, a time when there were but few dancing men, and fewer *danseuses* still, who had mastered the mysteries of the tripping *trois-temps*. But there were not wanting

those to rise to the occasion. Dancing was taken *au serieux*, the daily practice too often impinged upon the sacred hour of dinner, while a matutinal gyration was not a thing altogether unknown. Well directed and concentrated emulation brought about that success which is said ever to attend intelligent and patient industry. Excellence soon characterized the new departure and popularity followed in its wake, to the utter dismay and despair of the *deux temps* dowagers who found themselves discounted by the new-fangled idea.

"Splendid isolation" was theirs who discovered their inability to "*reverse*," while demand for exponents of the art brought into being that little band of select elect into whose serried and impervious ranks 'twere hard, indeed, to obtain admission, and who saw naught in all its members but a rare perfection. This hero-worship, or mutual admiration, gave reason and justification for the cognomen "Symma," a name gloried in and "borne without abuse" for a generation by the envied members of the Shanghai Young Men's Mutual Admiration Society.

THE SYMMA'S SONG.

In Shanghai's model City
Of piece goods, silk and tea,
The Symma sets the fashion,
Adorns Society.

We're young, genteel and pretty,
A high-toned, soulful crew,
The ladies think us witty;
Be sure, we think so too.

Chorus.

For we're very fond of dancing,
And you'll think us none the worse,
That we *nevah daunce* with *ladies*
Unless they can reverse.

We dress in last new fashion,
Black socks and waistcoats white,
For Chinese Smallpage[a] clothes us,
We're perfumed by Polite.[b]

Our functions are so varied,
We'll mention just a few,
To be a *puckah* Symma,
This is what you must do.

Must find small talk for ladies,
You must not make them blush,
The secret of success is
Perennial flow of gush,

Must hang around Church porches,[c]
Though Envy dub you bores,
Must fetch and carry prayer-books;
Attend to brougham doors.

Must stand in front of mirrors,
Must practice making eyes,
At balls must wait at supper
On her you patronize.

Gyrate in highest circles,
Refuse no invitation,
Remember that our motto's
Mutual Admiration.

Now all you young new comers
Who really wish to be
Beloved of Shanghai's fair ones,
Pets of Society,

Take your example from us,
And practise well our rôle,
Although we stoop to Commerce,
Our life is *haute-ecole.*

[a] Celestial sartor much in vogue at the time.
[b] Shanghai's quondam Truefitt.
[c] Church was more fashionable then than now.

N. B.

The Editors of the "RATTLE," invite contributions of light articles, verses, and sketches. [Humourous rather than sentimental verse preferred, and short articles rather than long.] Sketches should be in pen or ink, to facilitate reproduction, and in clear outline rather than detail work. MSS. and drawings which the editors are unable to publish will be returned to the sender. The Editors will not be liable, however, for loss or damage.

Anonymous contributions politely ignored.

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CHOICEST WINES ONLY KEPT IN STOCK.

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1000 Candle Power for one hour costs 10 cents.

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